

REMARKS

The Present Application was submitted to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office on 21 June 2007. The Present Application is a U.S. National Phase Application of PCT Patent Application No. PCT/EP2005/0002925, which was filed with the European Patent Office on 18 March 2005. The PCT Patent Application claims priority to German Patent No. 10 2004 013 969, which was filed on 19 March 2004, and which issued on 29 December 2005. Initially, the Present Application was filed with Claims 1-26. Since then, Claims 1-26 have been cancelled, Claims 27-45 have been added and Claim 45 has been withdrawn pursuant to a Restriction Requirement. Thus, by this Response, Claims 27-44 remain pending in the Present Application.

In the 13 March 2009 Communication, the Examiner rejected Claims 27-32, 34-6, 39-40 and 42 as being anticipated, under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b), by U.S. Patent No. 6,335,869 to Branch *et al.* ("*Branch*"). Additionally, the Examiner rejected Claim 33 as being unpatentable over *Branch* in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,102,579 to Stewart. Further, the Examiner objected to Claims 37-8, 41 and 43-4, but indicated that they would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

In light of the Examiner's comments regarding the Allowable Subject Matter of Claims 37-8, 41 and 43-4, Applicant has amended the pending Claims to incorporate the subject matter of Claim 41 into Independent Claim 27 (and all limitations of any intervening Claims). Additionally, Applicant has made various amendments to the pending Claims, for purposes of clarity and accuracy, partially due to the fact that the Present Application was initially filed in the German language.

In light of the Remarks and Amendments presented herein, Applicant respectfully asserts that this Response overcomes the latest rejections, and places the Present Application in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicant requests as such. Should the Examiner not agree, or have any further questions, the Examiner is requested to contact Applicant's undersigned representative.

Date: 13 August 2009

Respectfully submitted,

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